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Wilson Threatens to Reveal CIA Secrets

By Al Kamen
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A lawyer for former CIA agent Edwin P. Wilson, who has been accused of supplying explosives and terrorist training for Libyan ruler Muammar Qaddafi, said yesterday that if the case went to trial Wilson would reveal "explosive" information that would "shake the CIA to its foundations and perhaps even the government."

The lawyer, Herald Price Fahringer, made the comments to reporters after U.S. District Court Chief Judge John Lewis Smith Jr. turned down Wilson's request that his \$20 million bail be reduced. Fahringer said he would appeal the ruling. Fahringer said the information Wilson would reveal at a trial "reaches up into some pretty high places" and was related to work Wilson did with the agency after he formally retired from the CIA in 1971 and left the top-secret U.S. Navy Task Force 157 in 1976.

Wilson began working under contract with the Libyan government shortly after he left the task force. The CIA has repeatedly denied that the agency was connected with or sanctioned Wilson's activities in Libya.

In the 90-minute hearing yesterday, Fahringer told Smith that the case presented questions of "graymail"—a term used to refer to situations in

which the government might decide to halt prosecution of a defendant rather than have intelligence information revealed.

Fahringer told Smith that Wilson might have to "disclose what he did and what information he was supplying." Fahringer told reporters afterward that he could not be more specific on the type of information Wilson had or to whom he was supplying it.

Wilson's case could become the first test of a new federal law designed to prevent "graymail" by allowing judges to screen sensitive intelligence material in closed sessions.

In court papers and in the hearing yesterday, Fahringer and another lawyer for Wilson, John A. Keats, have said Wilson supplied valuable information to the government during discussions by telephone and in a meeting with prosecutors in Rome.

Fahringer said one item Wilson supplied was the name of a Midwest airplane supply company that had been selling spare parts and equipment to Libya. That company, according to sources familiar with the information, is a Northbrook, Ill.-based firm called Tencom. A federal grand jury in Chicago indicted Tencom, two of its officers and a Libyan Air Force colonel yesterday for shipping \$14 million in airplane and helicopter parts to Libya without proper licenses.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Carol E. Bruce asked Smith to order Wilson held without bond, saying he was able to secure false passports and citing a threat he allegedly made to kill the chief prosecutor in the case, Assistant U.S. Attorney E. Lawrence Barcella Jr.

Bruce also said Wilson understated the value of his holdings when he asked for reduction of his bail. Wilson included property in Northern Virginia worth nearly \$10 million, but failed to include more than \$6 million in property in Mexico, Great Britain and Lebanon, prosecutors have said. Bruce said the intelligence information Wilson supplied was "worthless" or designed to harm a business competitor.

In court papers filed by Barcella, Bruce and Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard C. Otto, prosecutors confirmed for the first time that Wilson, who was indicted by a federal grand jury in Houston yesterday for shipping 20 tons of explosives to Libya in 1977, also is under investigation in Colorado for participation in the attempted assassination in 1980 of a Libyan dissident.

The prosecutors also confirmed that he is being investigated by a federal grand jury in Alexandria for, "among other things," corruption of public officials. Sources familiar with that investigation have said the public officials include present and former members of U.S. intelligence agencies.